

THE HAZEL GREEN HERALD.

VOLUME 1.

HAZE/GREEN, WOLFE COUNTY, KY., WEDNESDAY, MARCH 11, 1885.

NUMBER 2.

The Herald

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Coroner, J. C. Fields
Assessor, S. B. Smith
Surveyor, C. M. Follen
Master of Public Schools, J. M. Kash

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County Supt. Public Schools, W. C. Taylor
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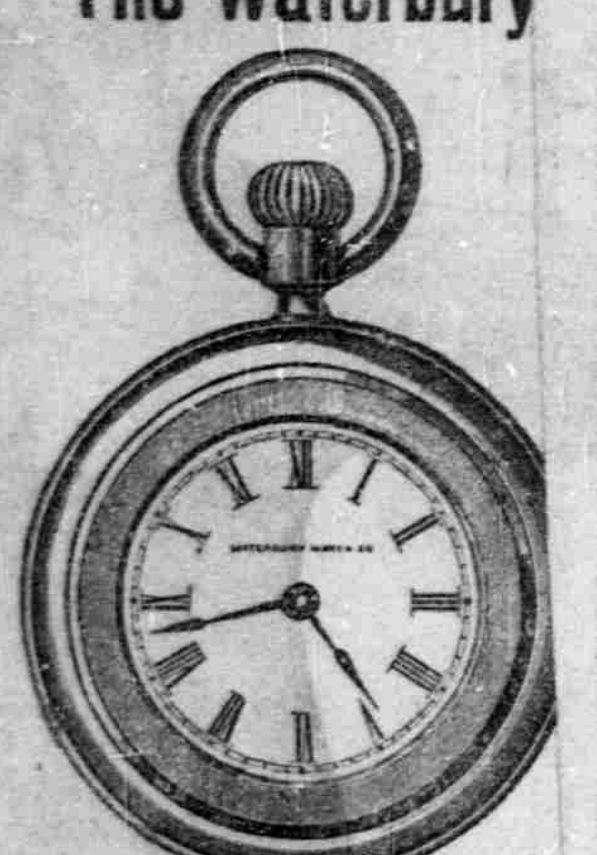
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GEOLOGY OF SECTION

FROM NEAR CAMPTON, IN WOLFE COUNTY, TO THE MOUTH OF TROUBLESSOME CREEK, IN BREATHITT COUNTY.

[P. N. Moore, State Geological Survey.]

The limestones, so pure in quality and so persistent in position, which often serve as guides in the identification of coal seams near the Ohio river, seem to be entirely wanting here, and we have in their places these numerous, erratic, and untrustworthy bands of impure limestone, which are of almost no value whatever for use in geological identification.

The absence of these limestones, and the frequency with which the sandstones and shales change character, render the construction of an accurate section, and the identification of coal seams across any great interval, a matter of considerable difficulty. The absence of limestone and fine shales, as well as the character of the prevailing rock, which is a coarse mechanical sediment for the most part, indicates the prevalence throughout this region, during its deposition, of shallow waters much disturbed by currents, accompanied by frequent changes of level. There was no subsidence deep enough or long enough continued to allow the formation of pure limestones, nor were the waters quiet and land-locked lagoons, in which the fine mud could settle undisturbed, to be afterwards compacted into shale beds.

It is worthy of notice, that the sub-carboniferous limestone, which in Ohio is thin and frequently wanting altogether, thickens from the Ohio river to the southward, while the limestones of the coal measures, several of which are found in Ohio, disappear soon after crossing into Kentucky.

SECTION.

Accompanying this report will be found a horizontal section showing the principal features of the geology, from the dividing ridge west of Campton to the Kentucky river, at the mouth of Troublesome creek. This section is by no means complete, and it is not offered as such. On the contrary, as already stated, it will probably be found to need considerable correction when the country comes to be examined in detail; and it is not at all impossible that, especially in the southeastern end of the section, some of the connections between the coals may be found to be incorrect. It is believed, however, that the greater portion of the section is correct. The measurements for elevation were made with an aneroid barometer, without any correction from a check barometer, at a time of the year when atmospheric variations are often sudden and great, so that there is a liability to error from this cause. On the other hand, the measurements for level were usually made with the Kentucky river as a base, the level of this being known from actual survey, and the variations were checked as often as possible by returning to the river. The measurements for distance were probably made some correction, as they were not obtained from the most reliable sources, the existing maps of this region being very imperfect. The section is given as the best that could be accomplished with the time and means at command, and it serves very well to show the principal features of the geology of this region.

It will be seen that there is a total thickness of seven hundred and fifty feet of strata above the top of the conglomerate included in the accompanying section. This, with the three hundred and twenty-five feet of conglomerate and sub-conglomerate beds, makes a total thickness of one thousand and seventy-five feet of carboniferous rocks above the sub-carboniferous limestone, from the river at the mouth of Troublesome creek to the edge of the coal measures.

COAL.

The coals of this region are numerous and of excellent quality, and, taken as a whole, will bear comparison with those found in any other portion of the state in quality or thickness. They are all classed as bituminous coals; but they show all the varieties of this class, known as dry-burning, caking, and cannel coals. The principal coals are of the dry or free burning variety, while the caking or fat coals are comparatively rare. Cannel coals are abundant and of excellent quality; certain of them having a reputation second to none in the State.

As yet, this region is almost entirely undeveloped, so that it is difficult or impossible, without the most detailed and careful study, to obtain a complete section, showing the thickness and position of all of the coal seams—a study which has, as yet, not been given to it. There are numerous mines along the Kentucky river, where coal has been mined for shipment in boats down the river; but none of them are extensive, and the majority are now abandoned and have fallen in.

The practice is to open a drift from which a few boat-loads of coal are taken.

when, as soon as it is far enough underground to render it a matter of some labor to get the coal to the mouth of the drift, it is abandoned, and another one opened. The so-called mines are, therefore, but a series of shallow pits.

Of late years, owing to the low price of coal in the lower markets, coal mining has not been as profitable as formerly, and but little is now mined in this region, except of the finer grades of cannel coal, which bring a higher price, and can, therefore, yet be mined and transported at a profit.

The cause of this stagnation in the mining industry is the excessive cost of transportation; due entirely to the uncertainty and danger of the river navigation. Coal-boats drawing five feet of water can only be run during high water, which can be expected but for a very small part of the year. This, therefore, necessitates the storage of large quantities of coal, often for months after it is mined, while waiting for a rise in the river sufficient to carry it off. This storage is of great detriment to the coal, as it is injured by exposure to the weather. In addition to the injury and loss by exposure, an extra cost is involved through the loss of capital lying idle for so long a time.

The boats used to carry the coal down the river can never be returned, and they are, therefore, usually sold at a great loss. The river is so difficult of navigation, that from three to five men are required to manage each boat, or one man to about each thousand bushels of coal; the boats usually holding from three to five thousand bushels of coal each.

In addition to these necessary and inevitable expenses, there is great risk involved in the navigation of the river, a large proportion of the boats never reaching their destination.

These combined causes make the cost of coal, at the markets along the lower river, so great, that Pennsylvania coal is brought down the Ohio river, up the Kentucky, and sold at a less price in Frankfort than the coal from this region. Thus, the work that has been done by the State in improving the navigation of the Kentucky river, for a part of its course only, actually operates against the interests of Kentucky coal miners, instead of furthering them, for it enables Pennsylvania coal to compete with them in their own markets, without assisting them in any degree. Were Kentucky riverslack-watered to the mines, so that coal could be shipped at nearly all seasons of the year, and the empty barges returned cheaply, this region could supply coal to the whole of that part of the state bordering the river, at prices which would drive all foreign coal from the market; and it could even do a larger business on the Ohio river in the fine cannel coals in which it abounds.

Until improved means of transportation are furnished this region, either by slackwater or railroad, there can be no extensive and regularly conducted mining enterprises. The fine-grade cannel coals will probably continue to be mined in a precarious and haphazard way, as they commonly bring a price sufficient to pay a small profit over the risk and expense of transportation; but, with this exception, the great body of coal will remain untouched.

The lowest coal mines on the Kentucky river are near the mouth of the South Fork, at Beatyville and Proctor, where one of the sub-conglomerate coals of excellent quality is mined. There are few mines above this for about twenty-five to thirty miles along the river, until near the mouth of Holly creek. Between these places the river runs through "the narrows," a gorge or canon which it has cut through the conglomerate. For most of this distance the sub-conglomerate coals are beneath the level of the river, while the hills do not rise sufficiently high over the conglomerate, until some distance back from the river, to hold the coals which have been mined further up.

Above Holly creek, banks have been opened every few miles, until the last are reached about five miles above Hazard, in Perry county. Most of these, as already stated, are abandoned, and have fallen in, so that exposures of the coal that can be measured are rare. Back from the river, openings or exposures of the coals are very few, as there has been no inducement to mine coal while wood is still the most common household fuel in use. In studying the geology of this country, therefore, reliance has to be placed mainly on natural exposures or outcrops of coal; so that it is a matter of considerable difficulty to obtain a complete section, showing the position of all the coals.

The change in the general character of the rocks from that of the region nearer the Ohio river, which has been referred to before, is accompanied, to a certain extent, with a change in the coals; but the region has not yet been examined over a sufficiently large area to

enable a generalization as to the number and equivalency of the coal seams. The section bears in its lower part a resemblance to that of the country near the Ohio river; but, after the first two hundred and fifty feet above the conglomerate is passed, the resemblance is not so great. There seem to be, here, greater changes between coals, within short distances, than are common farther north.

[CONTINUED NEXT WEEK.]

STATE NEWS.

Ex-Gov. Beriah Magoffin died on the 28th ult., and was buried on the 1st inst. at Harrodsburg.

The two days' combination horse sale at Lexington resulted in the disposition of ninety-seven head for \$25,763, an average of \$267.

Lexington's chamber of commerce is making a strong effort to secure the Kentucky Union railroad and a new furniture factory at that place.

Congressman Willis of the Louisville district has secured an appropriation of \$1,000,000 from congress for the erection of a custom-house in Louisville.

B. F. Avery, a prominent citizen of Louisville, and well known as a large manufacturer of agricultural implements, died at that place on the 3rd inst., aged 84 years.

The Farmers Home Journal thinks the wheat crop will be hardly above a half average yield, owing to the severe frozes and sudden thaws. The ground upheaved greatly, and the plants were lifted.

Bald Point, four miles above Vanceburg, Lewis county, is said to be the highest point of land between Pittsburg and New Orleans. It is the intention of the U. S. signal service to establish an observatory there.

William Meredith, a candidate for reelection to the legislature from Warren county, announces himself in favor of the whipping post for petty criminals, and the Bowling Green Times indorses his ideas on the subject.

Several farmers in Bourbon county will abandon the growing of tobacco and turn their attention to the cultivation of hemp. The latter they think is not so hard on the land and not as apt to be burned up in their barns.

James T. McFadden was arrested at Owensboro on the 3d inst., charged with the murder of Wm. Romines, in Owen county, in 1867. He had been a fugitive from justice for eighteen years. It is said that he has killed three men since killing Romines.

Breathitt county is awakening to the fact that she does not deserve the malignant epithets which in the past have so frequently been bandied around and boosted by the press at large. Jackson, the county seat now has in contemplation the erection of two handsome church edifices and an elegant high school building.

Hon. W. P. Taulbee was here last week for a few days, the first time since his election to congress. He left Monday morning to attend the inauguration at Washington. Mr. T. will perhaps be the youngest member of the next house, but will be one of its greatest orators. We will now say in print what we have predicted to various gentlemen in private. That Pres. Taulbee should live, will be governor of Kentucky inside of ten years. Just cut this out and put it in your scrap-book, and you will see that we are a prophet—Catlettsburg Democrat.

GENERAL NEWS.

General Grant is very low and his physicians say that his end is rapidly drawing nigh.

In Georgia an incendiary has been sentenced to death. The laws of that state provide the death penalty.

During the two sessions of the forty-eighth congress, there have been introduced in the house 8,286 bills and 345 joint resolutions.

The increase in the price of food in France has caused a great pressure to be brought upon the government, through the chamber of deputies, to remove the embargo upon the importation of pork from America.

Henry George was aboard the steamer Alaska when she was drifting about the Atlantic without a rudder, and it may be believed that he is more in favor of an equal distribution of land than ever before.—Milwaukee Journal.

The ministers of the Methodist church in Great Britain are practically denied the right of suffrage, because of the requirements of the registration law on the question of residence, owing to the circuit system, and the new redistribution bill increases the difficulty. The matter has been brought to the attention of the government, but no relief can be granted except through an amendment. This is an injustice to the individual, and a positive injury to the country, as it disfranchises a profession the peer of any in the realm.